#1

"HAIL HYDRA" STARTS NOW

MARVEL

#7

Steve★Rogers

CAPTAIN AMERICA®

NICK SPENCER • JESÚS SAIZ

Super-Soldier. Avenger. Agent of Hydra. He is...

Steve Rogers CAPTAIN AMERICA

Steve Rogers' reality has been secretly rewritten by Kobik, a sentient Cosmic Cube acting under the influence of the Red Skull. In Steve's new history, a Hydra agent named Elisa Sinclair enrolled Steve in a school that trained Hydra soldiers, believing that he had great potential despite his poor health. As a result, Captain America is now completely dedicated to Hydra's ideals.

The Red Skull believes that he and Captain America are on the same side, and even sent Steve to assassinate Baron Zemo, who was vying for control of Hydra...but the Skull's last rival didn't die with Zemo. Steve Rogers is secretly plotting with Dr. Erik Selvig to kill their master, believing that Hydra can't reach its true potential with the Red Skull in charge. But killing a man who possesses the telepathic powers of Charles Xavier is no easy task...

NICK SPENCER ★ WRITER

JESÚS SAIZ ★ ARTIST

VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA ★ LETTERING

STEPHANIE HANS ★ COVER

CARLOS LAO ★ PRODUCTION DESIGN

JAY ANACLETO & ROMULO FAJARDO; STEVE EPTING; BOB McLEOD; MIKE McKONE & FRANK D'ARMATA ★ VARIANT COVERS

ALANNA SMITH ★ ASSISTANT EDITOR

TOM BREVOORT ★ EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO ★ EDITOR IN CHIEF JOE QUESADA ★ CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER DAN BUCKLEY ★ PUBLISHER ALAN FINE ★ EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Captain America created by Joe Simon & Jack Kirby

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1935.

AND SO ZHANG HENG CLIMBED TO THE TOP OF THE TEMPLE TO CONFRONT THE GOLDEN CELESTIAL--THE SHIELD IN THE WEST, THE SPEAR IN THE EAST--BUT HIS SERVANT HAD MANY DOUBTS. STILL ZHANG HENG WAS UNBOWED.

CAN ANY OF YOU TELL ME WHAT IT IS WRITTEN THE MASTER SAID?

"CUT OFF ONE LIMB, TWO MORE SHALL TAKE ITS PLACE"?

-SIGH- NO, MATTHEW-- I'M AFRAID THAT IS NOT THE CORRECT ANSWER. ANYONE ELSE?

"THIS IS NOT HOW THE WORLD ENDS."

CORRECT, STEVEN! NOW--

BRRRRING

BUT THERE'S THE BELL-- CLASS DISMISSED, THEN. I EXPECT ALL OF YOU TO HAVE REPORTS ON MY DESK TOMORROW--

AH, STEVEN? A MOMENT, PLEASE?

YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, DOCTOR FENHOFF?

YES. THAT WAS A GOOD ANSWER YOU GAVE, *HERR* ROGERS. I CONTINUE TO BE IMPRESSED BY YOUR PROGRESS.

THANK YOU, SIR--

YOU KNOW, WHEN YOU ARRIVED HERE, I DID NOT HAVE MUCH HOPE FOR YOU. AND AT FIRST, IT SEEMED AS THOUGH ALL MY FEARS WOULD BE CONFIRMED--BUT LOOK AT YOU ***NOW***.

DESPITE YOUR ***PHYSICAL*** LIMITATIONS, YOUR ***ACADEMIC*** PERFORMANCE COULD NOT BE STRONGER, YOU EXHIBIT REAL ***LEADERSHIP SKILLS,*** AND YOUR DEDICATION TO OUR CAUSE IS WITHOUT PEER AMONG THE STUDENTS.

I--I'M JUST TRYING TO PROVE MYSELF ***WORTHY,*** SIR.

WE HAVE SOME NEW ENTRANTS ARRIVING TOMORROW--AND I COULD USE SOME HELP...***ACCLIMATING*** THEM TO WHAT WE DO HERE, SHOWING THEM AROUND THE KEEP.

DO YOU THINK THAT'S SOMETHING YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN?

I WOULD BE ***HONORED,*** SIR.

EXCELLENT. OFF YOU GO, THEN. HAIL HYDRA.

HAIL HYDRA.

UNBELIEVABLE. THEY'RE LETTING THE AMERICAN HALF-PINT LEAD THE ***ORIENTATIONS*** NOW? COULD HE EVEN GET THROUGH THE TOUR WITHOUT HIS ***ASTHMA*** ACTING UP?

HE ONLY GOT IN HERE BECAUSE MR. WHITEHALL HAS A THING FOR THE WITCH, DON'T FORGET.

DON'T WORRY, BOYS. I GOT A ***PLAN***. THIS IS ***HYDRA,*** AFTER ALL--

"--ONLY THE **STRONGEST** SURVIVE."

"NOW, WHERE **WERE** WE? AH, YES--"

TODAY.

--YOU WANT TO **KILL** THE **RED SKULL.**

I WANT TO **RESTORE THE GLORY OF HYDRA,** DOCTOR SELVIG. YOU AND I BOTH KNOW THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE SO LONG AS JOHANN SCHMIDT IS AT THE HEAD OF IT.

BUT--HE IS THE **SUPREME LEADER--OUR** SUPREME LEADER!

HE ORDERED ME TO **EXECUTE** YOU.

YES-- LET'S GET TO WORK, THEN.

DEFEATING THE SKULL SOUNDS LIKE AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK, THOUGH--AFTER ALL, HE CURRENTLY POSSESSES THE BRAIN OF **CHARLES XAVIER,** MAKING HIM THE WORLD'S STRONGEST TELEPATH.

IT IS QUITE DIFFICULT TO ASSASSINATE A MAN WHO CAN READ YOUR MIND'S INTENTION TO **DO** SO, AFTER ALL. HOW HAVE YOU AVOIDED HIS DETECTION SO FAR?

I HAVE SOME...**TRAINING** IN THAT DEPARTMENT. AND EVEN WITH XAVIER'S POWERS, THE SKULL'S RANGE IS STILL **LIMITED.**

YES, WELL, YOU CAN'T BE A CONTINENT AWAY WHEN YOU PUT THE KNIFE IN HIS BACK, UNFORTUNATELY. AND THAT NOTWITHSTANDING--

--THERE IS THE FACT THAT HE HAS AN **ARMY.** HE IS SWEEPING ACROSS EUROPE AND YOUR OWN HOMELAND, DRAWING THEM IN BY THE THOUSANDS. IF YOU ARE REALLY TO DO THIS, MY ADVICE WOULD BE TO STRIKE **QUICKLY...**

EVERY DAY HE ONLY GROWS **STRONGER.**

WE HAVE COME SO FAR, MY BROTHERS.

HYDRA HAS MADE ITSELF KNOWN ACROSS THE GLOBE.

YOUR STRENGTH-- YOUR ***SACRIFICE***-- HAS MADE ALL THIS POSSIBLE. AND NOW ***REVOLUTION*** IS UPON US!

WE ARE STRIKING AT THE VERY HEART OF THE ESTABLISHMENT, EXPOSING THEIR WEAKNESS AND CORRUPTION TO ALL. THEY FEAR US NOW, AS WELL THEY SHOULD.

THEY SEE THEIR REGIMES ***COLLAPSING*** AROUND THEM, AS THE PEOPLE DEMAND TO HAVE THEIR VOICES HEARD!

AND SO OF COURSE THEY FIGHT HARDER THAN ***EVER***-- TRY TO BREAK OUR RESOLVE-- BUT WE WILL ANSWER ***YET AGAIN!***

THEY HAVE ENRICHED THEMSELVES WHILE ***YOU*** GROW ***POORER!*** THEY HAVE WELCOMED YOUR ENEMIES TO THE TABLE WHILE YOU FEAST ON SCRAPS! THESE SINS WILL NOT BE FORGIVEN.

AND NOW IT IS TIME FOR US TO OPEN A ***NEW*** FRONT IN THIS WAR, MY FRIENDS. IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO MERELY ***TEAR DOWN*** THE OLD STRUCTURES-- WE MUST ALSO ***BUILD ANEW*** THAT WHICH WE DESTROY!

WE OURSELVES MUST OFFER A ***BETTER WAY!*** WE WILL SHOW THE WORLD WHAT OUR GLORIOUS REIGN LOOKS LIKE--AND THEY WILL RUSH TO JOIN US, LAYING WASTE TO THEIR MASTERS!

AND SO WE WILL BEGIN HERE, IN THIS PLACE--

--***SOKOVIA.***

SOKOVIA.

A FORMER SOVIET BLOC NATION PLAGUED BY DECADES OF BRUTAL CONFLICT AND CORRUPTION.

TODAY, UNITED NATIONS HUMANITARIAN RELIEF MISSIONS STRUGGLE TO ALLEVIATE THE HUNGER AND SICKNESS THAT HAS BEFALLEN A COUNTRY RAVAGED BY WAR AND BROKEN BY INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS.

THE CITIES ARE HOLLOWED-OUT HUSKS AFTER YEARS OF BOMBINGS, WITH MANY AREAS LACKING CLEAN DRINKING WATER OR BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE--

PRESS

--AND THE CRIES OF THOSE SUFFERING GO UNHEARD BY THE COUNTRY'S BRUTAL DICTATOR, GENERAL KAMIL NOVOTY. THE BUTCHER, AS HE IS CALLED BY MANY OF HIS CITIZENS.

NOVOTY'S TOTALITARIAN CONTROL AND APPALLING HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD IS THE STUFF OF INFAMOUS LEGEND, BUT RECENTLY HE HAS FACED A NEW CHALLENGE TO HIS AUTHORITY--

--HYDRA.

LONG SYNONYMOUS WITH FASCISM AND TERRORISM, THE GROUP IS PLAYING A DIFFERENT ROLE HERE--

--AS **LIBERATORS.**

AS THEIR FORCES MARCH ACROSS THE NORTHERN REGIONS, THEY ARE BEING GREETED AS CONQUERING HEROES BY SOKOVIANS DESPERATE TO SEE NOVOTY OVERTHROWN, AND WILLING TO OVERLOOK ANY IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES IN THE MEANTIME.

ANSOR KRYZEMEN, WHO SAID HE LOST A SISTER TO ONE OF THE REGIME'S CHEMICAL ATTACKS, SAID HE WAS SUPPORTING THE INVASION.

FOR MANY YEARS, THE WEST DID NOTHING. THEY WOULD **CLAIM** TO CARE FOR US, BUT IT WAS NOTHING BUT **EMPTY WORDS.**

NOW WE ARE FIGHTING BACK. NOW WE ARE **FREE.** I MAY NOT AGREE WITH THESE MEN ABOUT **EVERYTHING,** BUT **TODAY** THEY HAVE ANSWERED OUR PRAYERS. HAIL HYDRA!

BUT THAT SENTIMENT IS NOT SHARED BY S.H.I.E.L.D. LEADERSHIP--

WHILE WE'VE LONG OPPOSED THE SOKOVIAN GOVERNMENT AND ITS HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, HYDRA **CANNOT** BE ALLOWED TO ESTABLISH TERRITORY IN EUROPE.

IT WOULD HAVE A DESTABILIZING EFFECT ON THE ENTIRE REGION AND THREATEN GLOBAL SECURITY INTERESTS IN TOO MANY WAYS TO COUNT.

WE CANNOT ALLOW **FASCISM** TO RETURN TO POWER IN THE WESTERN WORLD.

EVEN STILL, WORLD LEADERS HAVE BEEN SLOW TO RESPOND-- MANY EXPRESSING FRUSTRATION OVER BEING CAUGHT BETWEEN A ROCK AND HARD PLACE, WITH NO NATURAL ALLY IN THE CONFLICT. THE GRIDLOCK CONTINUES--

--EVEN AS MILITARY EXPERTS CLAIM HYDRA'S BLOOD MARCH THROUGH THE COUNTRY COULD REACH THE CAPITAL CITY WITHIN DAYS.

TONIGHT WE WILL BECOME SOMETHING GREATER--SOMETHING ***STRONGER***-- THAN EVER BEFORE!

"TONIGHT WE WILL SHOW THE WORLD WHAT WE HAVE BUILT-- THEY WILL WATCH, HELPLESS, AS WE INHERIT THE EARTH.

"TONIGHT WE WILL BREAK A NATION AND MAKE IT OURS!"

AND WHEN IT IS OVER, THEY WILL KNEEL BEFORE US! THEY WILL KNOW OUR TRUE POWER!

AS WE GO TO FIGHT, LET THE CALL RING OUT--

HAIL HYDRA!

IT'S GOOD TO HAVE *FRIENDS.*

PEOPLE YOU CAN *COUNT* ON--

EVEN WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN.

ESPECIALLY THEN.

CAPTAIN ROGERS! SURRENDER NOW-- WE HAVE YOU *SURROUNDED.*

NO--

--HE HAS YOU *DISTRACTED.*

NATASHA ROMANOV--THE BLACK WIDOW-- IS A SORT OF FRIEND.

NOT THE KIND YOU TRUST--

--BUT THE KIND YOU SOMETIMES ***NEED.***

WELL, WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE, FELLAS?

LOOKS TO ME LIKE UNSUPERVISED CREATIVE EXPRESSION NOT INTENDED TO GLORIFY HYDRA.

THAT'S AN ***INFRACTION,*** ISN'T IT?

IT IS... BUT I FIGURE WE CAN HANDLE THIS ONE JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES, YEAH?

OH, ABSOLUTELY.

GIVE THAT BACK!

NO NEED TO GET THE ***TEACHERS*** INVOLVED--

L-LOOK, GUYS--I DON'T WANT ANY TROUBLE--

OH, THIS ISN'T ***TROUBLE,*** STEVIE--

IT'S ***PUNISHMENT.***

I NEVER USED TO HAVE MANY FRIENDS--

BUT WAR CHANGED ALL THAT.

IT'S THE ULTIMATE TEST OF THOSE BONDS. YOU EITHER LEARN TO STAND TOGETHER--

--OR YOU FALL APART PRETTY FAST.

AND WHAT YOU EVENTUALLY LEARN IS--

--HOW MUCH STRONGER IT MAKES YOU, STANDING TOGETHER...

...HOW MUCH MORE BECOMES POSSIBLE. NOT ONLY THAT--

--BUT HOW MUCH BETTER IT FEELS WHEN YOU GET IT.

I APPRECIATE YOU SHOWING UP FOR THE ASSIST, NAT.

YOU KIDDING? AND MISS THIS LITTLE STROLL DOWN MEMORY LANE? I CARVED MY INITIALS INTO THAT CELL OVER THERE--

--YOU NEVER FORGET YOUR FIRST WATERBOARDING.

SOKOVIANS REALLY KNOW THEIR PRISONS--IT'S, LIKE, THE FIRST THING THEY MENTION ON *TRIPADVISOR*, BUT THEY DO HAVE ONE BIG PROBLEM--

--DESERTERS.

NOW, COMMANDANT--I'M GUESSING THESE CELLS ARE FULL OF VERY DANGEROUS MEN THAT YOU'VE TORTURED AND MOCKED ENDLESSLY.

SO I'LL GIVE YOU THE OPTION--YOU CAN OPEN ***ONE CELL*** OF OUR CHOOSING--

--OR WE CAN OPEN ***ALL OF THEM.***

PUSH THEM BACK!

THERE'S *TOO MANY* OF THEM, GENERAL!

WHERE ARE OUR *REINFORCE-MENTS?!*

TOO MANY ARE DESERTING-- THEY SAY THE CITY HAS FALLEN--

INTO YOUR *STUDY*, SIR!

WE'LL HOLD THEM AS LONG AS WE CAN!

GENERAL NOVOTY, AT LAST YOU ARRIVE.

TEA?

IF YOU INTEND TO TOY WITH ME BEFORE YOU KILL ME, DO ME THE DIGNITY--

GENERAL, PLEASE--IF I WANTED TO TOY WITH YOU, I COULD HAVE YOU DANCE THE BALLET ACROSS THIS ROOM WITH YOUR SIDEARM IN YOUR MOUTH--AND GIVE A FLAWLESS PERFORMANCE.

I CAN DO THAT WITH MY ***MIND,*** YOU KNOW.

NOW, SIT.

I ADMIRE WHAT YOU'VE DONE WITH THE PLACE. GASSING YOUR OWN CITIES, TORTURING POLITICAL PRISONERS--IT'S NOT THE MOST ***ORIGINAL*** APPROACH, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING TO BE SAID FOR STICKING TO THE CLASSICS.

AND THE WAY YOU'VE PITTED YOUR ENEMIES AGAINST ONE ANOTHER--PARALYZED THEM INTO INACTION AGAINST YOU--AGAIN, FINE WORK.

HMPH. BUT ALL FOR NOTHING NOW, YES? THE BUTCHER GENERAL IS TO BE SLICED UP BY A MAN EVEN MADDER THAN HIMSELF.

I'M SURE YOU'LL PARADE MY HEAD THROUGH THE STREETS, AS THE PEASANTS CHEER MY DEFEAT--

OH, TO THE ***CONTRARY,*** KAMIL--

--YOU'RE ABOUT TO CELEBRATE THE GREATEST ***VICTORY*** OF YOUR CAREER.

I--I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

OF COURSE YOU DON'T. BUT TRUST ME--OUTSIDE THESE DOORS, YOUR FORCES WILL PUSH BACK THE INSURGENTS AND DRIVE THEM FROM THE CAPITAL SQUARE.

OVERNIGHT YOU WILL RETAKE THE CITY, WHILE WE MANAGE TO HOLD ON TO ONLY THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES.

IT WILL BE A CRUSHING DEFEAT FOR HYDRA, A PERSONAL HUMILIATION FOR ME--AND A HISTORIC MOMENT FOR YOUR REGIME.

YOU ARE GOING TO... ***LET*** ME WIN? W-WHY?

FOR MONTHS, HYDRA HAS BEEN CONDUCTING ASYMMETRICAL ATTACKS ON THE ALLIED FORCES--A TERROR CAMPAIGN THAT HAS HAD THE DESIRED POLITICAL EFFECT.

BUT THAT APPROACH, AS YOU KNOW, HAS ITS LIMITATIONS--AND I AM IMPATIENT TO REACH THE NEXT STAGE.

AT THE SAME TIME, ONE MUST BE ACCEPTING OF ONE'S LIMITATIONS. WHILE MY FLEDGLING ARMY IS STRONG ENOUGH TO INFLICT GREAT PAIN ON A LONELY DESPOT, AGAINST THE ARMIES OF THE WEST IT IS NOTHING.

ALAS, WE HAVE RUN OUT OF TARGETS SOFT ENOUGH TO INVADE. SO INSTEAD--

--WE WILL MAKE ***THEM*** COME TO ***US***. HERE, IN ***SOKOVIA***.

THIS MAKES NO SENSE. YOU THINK ***S.H.I.E.L.D.*** WILL COME TO MY AID? THEY'VE NEVER--

NEVER BEFORE. BUT ONCE YOU DEFEAT ME ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE, THEY WILL FIND A WAY.

YOU WILL BECOME THE APPLE IN THE GARDEN--THE ONLY MAN CAPABLE OF DEFEATING HYDRA ONCE AND FOR ALL. THEY WILL GIVE YOU EVERYTHING YOU ASK FOR.

AND YOU WILL ASK FOR ***SO MUCH.***

I WILL SET THIS TRAP FOR THEM, AND THEY WILL RUSH TO BE SNARED. I WILL NOT FIGHT ***THEIR*** WAR--

--THEY WILL BE FIGHTING ***MINE.***

I SEE. SO...WHAT IS IN IT FOR ***ME?***

WHAT IS--

HAHAHA

KAMIL, YOU SLAY ME!

THERE IS ***NOTHING*** IN THIS FOR YOU, MY FRIEND, SAVE A BRIEF REPRIEVE. ONCE YOU HAVE FULFILLED YOUR PURPOSE TO ME, YOU WILL DIE, OF COURSE.

THEN I-- I WILL ***NOT*** DO IT!

OF COURSE YOU WILL. GENERAL, BOTH YOU AND I HAVE WATCHED MEN OFFER EVERYTHING-- THEIR FORTUNES, THEIR LOVED ONES--FOR JUST ONE MORE BREATH OF LIFE. I'M OFFERING YOU WEEKS, PERHAPS MONTHS WORTH OF BREATHS. IT'S A VERY GENEROUS OFFER!

AND OF COURSE, YOU WILL USE THE TIME TO PLOT YOUR ESCAPE, OR PERHAPS TRY TO GET THE UPPER HAND AGAINST ME. I'D EXPECT NOTHING LESS. BUT REST ASSURED, WHEN THAT MOMENT COMES, WELL--

--I'M QUITE PARTIAL TO *LA BAYADÉRE.*

THE LESSON HERE IS NONE OF US CAN DO MUCH OF ANYTHING ALONE.

THAT OUR ALLIANCES MAKE US STRONGER--

--EVEN, PERHAPS, THE UNWITTING ONES.

GOOD LEADERS ARE QUICK TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS--

--AND PROVE EARLY THAT THEY CAN BE RELIED UPON.

THOSE IN NEED DON'T TEND TO FORGET THAT.

GENERAL ALOIS DENZ-- A LEGENDARY LEADER, HELPED WIN SOKOVIA ITS INDEPENDENCE DECADES EARLIER--

--BEFORE HIS DESIRE FOR FREE ELECTIONS RAN AFOUL OF THE BUTCHER AND HE FOUND HIMSELF WASTING AWAY IN A PRISON CELL.

NOW HE'S S.H.I.E.L.D.'S NEWEST FRIEND.

YOUR COUNTRY **NEEDS** YOU AGAIN, GENERAL DENZ. WE CAN'T GIVE YOU YOUR OLD POSITION BACK--BUT THERE ARE PLENTY OF MEN IN THE NORTHERN REGIONS WHO STILL CALL YOU THEIR LEADER.

AND WE'RE PREPARED TO GIVE YOU ALL THE SUPPORT YOU NEED--WEAPONS, TRAINING, JUST ASK.

SOKOVIA'S BEEN A COLLAPSED STATE FOR TOO LONG--

--IT JUST NEEDS SOMEONE TO **SHOW** IT HOW TO BE **FREE**.

FOR YOU-- AND FOR MY PEOPLE--I WILL NOT **FAIL**, CAPTAIN.

I **KNOW** YOU WON'T, GENERAL.

WELL, THAT WAS FUN. YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO STICK AROUND? I KNOW A GREAT LITTLE BREAKFAST PLACE JUST PAST THE MASS GRAVES.

AFRAID I'M NEEDED ELSEWHERE. I **DO** APPRECIATE YOUR **HELP** HERE, THOUGH, NAT.

HEY, I KNOW THE TERRAIN. IF WE CAN USE THIS FIGHT BETWEEN NOVOTY AND HYDRA TO TAKE DOWN BOTH SIDES, MORE THAN WORTH TRYING.

THAT'S THE PLAN.

A **SAFER WORLD**, RIGHT?

GETTING CLOSER EVERY DAY.

GEEZ, THAT GUY REALLY IS A GREAT MOTIVATOR--

--I'M JEALOUS.

DIRECTOR HILL--

RELAX, ROMANOV. IF I WANTED YOU ARRESTED, YOU'D BE DOING THAT WEIRD THING YOU DO WITH YOUR THUMBS TO GET OUT OF THE HANDCUFFS BY NOW.

YOU MIGHT BE ON THE OUTS WITH S.H.I.E.L.D. OFFICIALLY, BUT THIS ONE IS AS OFF THE BOOKS AS THEY COME. SO FOR AS LONG AS SHARON, STEVE AND I ARE WILLING TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY--CONSIDER THIS A MOMENTARY TRUCE.

I JUST WANTED TO SEE HOW OUR **SAVIOR'S** DOING.

FRAIL. BUT **MOTIVATED.** YOU REALLY THINK HE'S GOT NO SHOT?

DON'T JOKE. EVERYONE LOYAL TO DENZ GOT GASSED BEFORE IPHONES HAPPENED. AT BEST, HE'LL COME UP WITH A FEW HUNDRED AMATEURS WHO WERE TRYING TO AVOID GETTING DRAFTED INTO THE OTHER TWO ARMIES.

I COULD GIVE THEM ALL **HULKBUSTER ARMOR SUITS,** AND THEY'D GET THEMSELVES KILLED SETTING OFF THE **AIRBAGS.**

SO WHY GO THROUGH ALL THIS TROUBLE?

TWO WORDS--

--COORDINATED AIR STRIKES. WAIT, IS THAT **THREE** WORDS? DOESN'T MATTER. POINT IS, S.H.I.E.L.D. CAN'T HELP A BUTCHER LIKE NOVOTY BEAT HYDRA.

BUT GOOD OLD, LOVABLE GENERAL DENZ? HERO **FREEDOM FIGHTER?** HIM WE CAN DROP A LOT OF BOMBS FOR.

AND WHEN THAT HELPS NOVOTY TAKE BACK HIS COUNTRY?

THIS IS NOT THE HOUSE WE LIVE IN, NAT-- WE CAN'T TELL THE NEIGHBORS WHAT TO MAKE FOR DINNER. NOVOTY MIGHT BE THE MOST UNDERRATED OF HISTORY'S GREATEST MONSTERS, BUT IT'S HIM OR THE RED SKULL.

OF THE TWO--

--WHICH ONE DO YOU THINK SHOWS UP AT OUR DOOR FIRST?

SO THIS IS WHAT I WOULD SAY AS YOUR FRIEND, NATASHA--

--THIS WILL BE YOUR **UNDOING.**

TOO MANY COMPROMISES. TOO MANY TIMES LOOKING AWAY. THE DEALS YOU MAKE WITH YOURSELF, SUPPOSEDLY OUT OF NECESSITY--

--THEY ALWAYS CATCH UP TO YOU, AND IN THE END--

--EVERYTHING HAS A PRICE.

STAY DOWN, YANK!

I...I CAN DO THIS--

YES, I'M SURE YOU CAN--

--BUT YOU SHOULDN'T *HAVE* TO.

WHO THE HELL'S THERE?!

SOMEONE WHO CAN COUNT--

--AND WOULD LIKE TO EVEN THE ODDS SOMEWHAT.

IT'S TOO MUCH.

DOCTOR SELVIG--

PLEASE, CAPTAIN--YOU MUST LISTEN TO ME--THIS IS A ***FOOL'S ERRAND.*** SURELY YOU CAN ***SEE*** THIS--

S.H.I.E.L.D.

THE ***AVENGERS.***

HYDRA.

THE ***RED SKULL.***

YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT DESTROYING THE MOST POWERFUL STRUCTURES AND PEOPLE--YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT TRYING TO CHANGE THE FACE OF THE ENTIRE WORLD.

I WANT TO ***HELP*** YOU--I'VE ***PROMISED*** TO HELP YOU--BUT I AM JUST ***ONE MAN***--YOU ARE THE SAME--WE NEED MORE! WE NEED AN ARMY!

AND WE'LL HAVE ONE. ***EVENTUALLY.***

BUT--FOR NOW--THERE ARE JUST TOO MANY MOVING PARTS. TOO MUCH CAN GO WRONG IN SO FEW HANDS. I DO, HOWEVER, HAVE A SUGGESTION--

I STILL HAVE FILES FOR EVERY INMATE SENTENCED TO PLEASANT HILL. MANY OF THEM QUITE DANGEROUS, QUITE EFFECTIVE. PERHAPS WE COULD CONSIDER RECRUITING THEM--

NO. WE ARE NOT GOING TO BRING IN A BUNCH OF MERCENARIES AND CRIMINALS, NOT FOR THIS--IT'S TOO SENSITIVE.

WELL, WE HAVE TO DO ***SOMETHING!*** WE CAN'T HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS BY OURSELVES.

THAT'S NOT WHAT I SAID, ERIK--BELIEVE ME--

--WE'RE NOT GOING TO DO IT ALONE.

COME WITH ME--I WANT TO **SHOW** YOU SOMETHING.

NOW, I KNOW I TOLD YOU THAT SOME THINGS WOULD HAVE TO WAIT--

--SUCH AS WHAT'S BEHIND THE BIG DOOR.

"OF EVERY TREE OF THE GARDEN THOU MAYEST FREELY EAT..."

BUT I REALIZE IT'S PROBABLY PAST TIME YOU GOT SOME ANSWERS.

I APPRECIATE YOU BEING SO RESPECTFUL YOU **ONLY** TRIED TO HACK THE ENTRY CODE **SIX TIMES,** BY THE WAY.

YOU SAID WE NEED **ALLIES,** DOCTOR-- PEOPLE WE CAN **TRUST.** WELL--

--THIS PERSON I'D TRUST **WITH MY LIFE.**

LIKE I SAID--

--IT'S GOOD TO HAVE FRIENDS.

PATHETIC. NOW, LET'S GET YOU UP, SHALL WE?

W-WHO ARE YOU? I DON'T *RECOGNIZE* YOU--

THAT IS BECAUSE I AM ***NEW*** HERE. AND I WAS NOT SUPPOSED TO ARRIVE UNTIL TOMORROW MORNING-- BUT LUCKY FOR YOU I AM ALWAYS EARLY, YES?

MY NAME IS *HELMUT*--

"--HELMUT ZEMO."

NEXT